

INTERIM REPORT ON THE HEALTH AND SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE
RURAL DISTRICT OF DRAYTON FOR THE YEAR 1941.

24 JUL 42

R. On the instructions of the Ministry of Health the scope of the Annual Report has been restricted and again appears in an abridged form.

In the directions issued for guidance in compilation it has been pointed out that comparisons are likely to be fallacious owing to the variety and magnitude of local population movement and the uneven incidence of civilian deaths. This being so it is not intended to submit figures which would apparently be the basis for accurate comparison with those of peace time. Nevertheless, such figures as can be given and may be indicative to some extent of internal population changes, of improvements in service, and the presence of disease in the Area will be found in the revelant sections of the Report.

In the section on Infectious Diseases it will be noted that that common zymotic condition, measles, was present in large numbers during the year. The infection appeared to travel from the Central Town and reached its climax about one to two months later than in Market Drayton. Afterwards there was a gradual fall and disappearance from the Area. It is worth noting that the environs of this Authority were involved earlier than other parts of the North-Eastern District - the disease travelling southwards.

The decrease in respiratory tuberculosis is to be regarded with satisfaction at a time when a generalised rise has occurred over the Country. On average your District appears to be considerably lower in numbers for all tuberculous conditions than is expected to be found. 1941 saw the gradual adoption of the Emergency Measures put into force in 1940 to meet the changed conditions of administration.

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Orders concerning Water Supplies, the Control of Housing, certain Infectious Diseases and the Service of Meat to the District were the chief instances of these. For the current year, the Ministry of Health found it necessary to guard against the possibility of spread of diseases which could be associated with overcrowding and the movement of population. Orders giving guidance in the control and prevention are concerned with Typhus and Scabies, and in this connection measures to be taken against lice.

During the course of the Year the Ministry of Food, as an extension of their rationing scheme granted invalids certain privileges and concessions to secure a more abundant supply of certain articles: milk and eggs were mainly concerned.

Officers of Authorities were given the opportunity to become proficient in the methods of dealing with gas contaminated food-stuffs. For this purpose a series of lectures were held in certain neighbouring towns and your Officer attended at Birmingham. The application of this instruction to his locality was the chief consideration of the Sanitary Inspector.

The Principal Regional Medical Officer has, at times, directed attention to foodstuffs likely to carry disease through contamination.

The capacity of the District to deal with the hospitalization of expectant mothers was the subject of an investigation by the County Medical Officer.

The attention of Medical Practitioners has been directed as occasion arose to matters of common interest: this with a view to securing the maximum co-operation in the maintenance of efficiency in health practice.

The Medical Officer takes this opportunity of thanking your Sanitary Inspector for his loyalty and active collaboration in the work of the District during the course of the Year.

POPULATION. The surrounding villages still have to meet the demands on their constantly overtaxed living accommodation. For those unsuccessful in finding homes or lodgings a service of transport maintains a connection to the local works: from the homes of the workers in the morning and a return in the evening. It would seem that no present building plan could provide for this movement of population with the possible exception of the provision of quarters of a temporary nature. It appears that the use of transport will continue to be employed.

There still remains a proportion of the evacuees brought within the environs in the early days of reception. Together with these the transferred school for orthopaedic cases are reminders of the initial scheme and it is pleasing to note that the latter group have been able to settle in the country so satisfactorily..

Certain housing is being carried out in one quarter of the District but this has the benefit of priority and will have no effect in relieving civilian demand for homes.

Certain statistical figures supplied by the Ministry.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Live Births	76.	72.
of these	3.	4. were illegitimate.
Still Births	1.	2.
Deaths under one Year	8 (1 illegitimate)	
Deaths	50.	42.

Some causes of deaths :-

Tuberculosis	3.
Influenza	4.
Measles	2.
Cancer	14.
Heart disease	27.
Pneumonia	8.
Road Accident	0.

HEALTH LABORATORY SERVICE. The pathological and bacteriological connection with the University of Birmingham has been severed with the opening of the Donald-Hudson Laboratory at Shrewsbury. This has been built as an annexe to the Royal Salop Infirmary. Another connection with the Emergency Health Laboratory at Wellington, was broken when it was decided to remove their Headquarters to Hereford. In times of epidemic conditions this latter had been a great convenience and had been made use of locally in certain water investigations.

AMBULANCES. The same facilities have been available as for the Town.

WATER SUPPLIES. No extensive changes have been made in this provision in the course of the year. Small additional connections have been provided in the Hodnet Area and improvement made in the supply to the houses at Betton Crossing. In this latter instance the borehole was extended by lining with copper and by this relining and extension a certain cloudiness, with heavy clay sedimentation, was reduced.

The Authority now participates in the County Mutual Aid Scheme and are prepared to offer labour and material to their neighbours: these stocks and pipings have been acquired by your Water Engineer and are being held in reserve for this specific purpose. Private owners of water undertakings at Weston and Goldstone have been advised of the scheme.

Samples of water are analysed at regular intervals and the results,

particularly in the major supplies, have been satisfactory.

SCAVENGING. There is no regularised scheme for the District as the widely scattered nature of the Authority precludes this. In Woore, Norton-in-Hales, Hodnet and Stoke-on-Tern there are small tips where refuse can be deposited.

SHELTERS. There are no communal shelters within the scheme as the character of the surrounds is rural, but it is anticipated that Morrison shelters will be used in certain parts where conditions warrant.

MORTUARY ACCOMMODATION. No provision is made for this but facilities are available in the Central Town.

SEWERAGE AND DISPOSAL. Attention has been directed principally to the Hodnet Area. In this part the village service has been improved by the installation of a sedimentation tank system and proper control can now be exercised over a large proportion of the houses in this particular part. Coupled with this improvement the drainage from the main road has received attention and the possibility of flooding there has been greatly minimised. Again, the system serving the mansion of Hodnet - now used as a hospital - is being enlarged and the plant on the sedimentation, sprinkler bacterial bed basis should give satisfactory results.

The Cheswardine system, established for some time, has received regular inspection and supervision.

In the Hinstock area private drainage has been the subject of investigation, following complaint, and, eventually, improvement was obtained.



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HOUSING. No building scheme has been carried out by the Authority, but, so far as conditions permitted, maintenance repairs have been made by the Sanitary Inspector.

It has not been found necessary or convenient to grant licences for the rehabilitation of condemned property still standing. In this connection, offers were made to reopen houses at Mill Green, but these homes, of a poor quality, were outside the scope of rehabilitation without extensive reconditioning. This the applicants were not prepared to consider.

Overcrowding, while it has existed, has not been the subject of complaint.

The general cleanliness and hygiene of property has been closely supervised by the Sanitary Inspector and he has found it necessary to order the destruction of certain furnishings, mainly bedding, to maintain the standard.

MEAT AND FOODS. The District continues to be served with meat from the Central Abattoir at Whitchurch. During the course of the Year little food has had to be condemned and of this ham and mutton were the chief items.

Premises registered for the manufacture of foods have been visited and considerable alterations in the sanitation of premises at Woore were made to bring the buildings into line with bake-houses in other parts.

MILK AND DAIRIES. In a rural area of this dimension the supervision and control of dairies might well be a whole time job. The requirements of the Milk and Dairies Orders are, however, well known to

farmers and there should be no reason for any slackness in the supervision of cleanliness of shippens and dairy premises. This, despite the fact that all the improvements and alterations required have been unable to be put into effect on account of the Emergency Conditions. A remarkable case of neglect presented itself during the course of the summer when the absolute disregard of the tenant necessitated investigations by the Local Authority, the War Agricultural Committee and finally by the Ministry of Health. After prolonged meetings and discussions some improvement in cleanliness was achieved but it is anticipated that the War Agricultural Committee may follow the matter further with a view to change in tenancy.

The desire for purity in dairy products, and milk is the foundation of these, deserves the closest attention of this Council and a preparedness to act at once should the offender persist. In this connection, the scheme for improvement in cleanliness of milk, instituted in certain counties, and to be carried out by the Harper-Adam's College, in collaboration with your Officer may do something to improve and spur on producers to greater effort.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE. In common with many other parts of the North Eastern Area 1941 was an epidemic year for Measles. This infection had been evident in the Town before it started its spread through the Rural Parishes and it was about one month later that the full effects of the extension were felt. The peak of the outbreak was in the second quarter when some 230 cases were notified and following that there was a sharp drop to less than fifty in the third and so gradually the outbreak disappeared. There were 2 deaths from this disease.

Whooping Cough was present in small Numbers: some thirty cases were notified, divided almost equally amongst the first three quarters. Scarlet Fever gave rise to 11 cases: seven in the first and the third was free. As some of the cases in the first quarter occurred in an institution it cannot be said that the District suffered much from a general spread of this infection.

Cases of Diphtheria occurred in the First and Third Quarters:- 4 cases in all. As two of these in the Third Quarter occurred in adults it can readily be seen that the Area was almost free from the usual type of attack i.e. among young children.

Much credit for this position can be given to the Sanitary Inspector who conducted an intensive campaign earlier in the Year to immunise and protect the children and infants in the outlying parishes. So well did the scheme progress that in certain Districts all the children under Fifteen Years had received attention. A final assessment made at the end of the Year showed that in the over five years of age group 77% had been protected and in the infant and preschool section 12% had come forward for treatment. The latter gives a reading too low, as certain factors in the assessment had not been considered, and relative to the school children group should read higher. It is expected that a change will be made in the scheme for immunisation in the County generally and that control will be taken over by that Authority.

One isolated case of paratyphoid b.(enteric) fever occurred in the country. On investigation it was found that the patient had come

recently from outside the Area and it was considered that she had contracted the disease when away from home. Nevertheless, it was thought advisable to secure some improvements in the water supply to ^{the} house which was delivered by pump. This illness was the only one of the type which is commonly considered to have close association with war or congested conditions. The District was entirely free from cerebro-spinal Fever.

Other diseases which occurred were :- Pneumonia (4), Puerperal Pyrexia (3) and Erysipelas (1).

The Tuberculosis Register at the end of the Year was as follows:-

	Males.		Females.	
	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
1940.	6.	19.	10.	19.
1941.	6.	22.	7.	19.

The above shows a maintenance of a steady average of total cases with a decrease of respiratory disease among females. The total for the District would appear to be below the average for communities of similar size.

Impetigo and Scabies, while they did occur, did not give rise for concern excepting for certain cases of the latter among evacuees.

While the question of the source of scabies has not been satisfactorily decided there is little doubt that this District did not manifest any disease before the reception of town children: that evacuated children, in cases of disease have had close association with their Town homes and that, more often than not, where scabies has occurred in residents, evacuees have been in contact. Provision was made by the County Council to deal with the evacuee cases but it

was unfortunate that cases had to be moved many miles out of the Area to receive institutional treatment when an institution was available in the Town of Market Drayton and was being used for that purpose. While the local residents have not escaped the contagion absolutely, the demand for treatment has been limited. There was an increase towards the end of the Year. To meet this increase it is anticipated that accommodation will be available in the incoming year. As lack of cleanliness is frequently found with scabetic cases it will require careful administration among householders to deal with this problem when the quantity of household soap has been curtailed.

W.A.M. STEWART.

9th July, 1942.

